

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

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CNO WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 11474

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MNUC, MARR, MPOL, IT

SUBJECT: NUCLEAR POWER WARSHIP RELATED ISSUES

REFS: A) STATE 140105; B) STATE 083402; C) STATE 091399

1. RESULTS OF CNEN RADIOLOGICAL MONITORING AT LA MADDALENA WERE PUBLISHED IN THE JUNE 1975 ISSUE OF HOUSE ORGAN NOTIZIARIO (COPIES POUCHED). THE REPORT ON THE FEBRUARY 24 ECOLOGY CONFERENCE DID NOT APPEAR.

2. IMMEDIATELY ON HORIZON, HOWEVER, LOOMS A MEETING SPONSORED BY "GRUPPO AMBIENTE" (ENVIRONMENTALIST ORGANIZATION OF MAGISTRATE GIAFRANCO AMENDOLA) SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 24-25. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED A COPY (ADDRESSED TO AMBASSADOR) OF A NOTICE DISSEMINATED BY THE "GRUPPO AMBIENTE", FULL SELF-EXPLANATORY TEXT OF WHICH FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT: THE FIRST NATIONAL MEETING ON "U.S. NUCLEAR BASES, POPULATION AND ENVIRONMENT: THE CASE OF LA MADDALENA" WILL BE HELD AT THE PALAZZO DEI CONGRESSI, ROME (ROOM 34) ON 24
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AND 25 SEPTEMBER 1975.

THE MEETING WILL HEAR FIVE REPORTS:

- 1) POLITICAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS (DR. GIANFRANCO AMENDOLA)
 - 2) THE PROBLEM IN GENERAL (GIANCARLO TANAGLIA FROM THE ENVIRONMENT GROUP.
 - 3) INTERVENTION OF CNEN (NATIONAL NUCLEAR ENERGY COMMITTEE) AT LA MADDALENA (PROF. MARIO MITTEMPERGHER, FROM CNEN)
 - 4) THE ROLE OF THE CENTRAL AND PERIPHERAL HEALTH AGENCIES IN THE PROTECTION OF THE POPULATION IN RELATION TO THE NAVAL NUCLEAR FACILITIES (PROF. EUGENIO TABET FROM THE SUPERIOR INSTITUTE OF HEALTH)
 5. THE ROLE OF THE SARDINIAN REGION (DR. MARIA TERESA SIRIGU FROM THE SARDINIAN REGIONAL ECOLOGICAL ASSESSOR'S OFFICE).
- THERE WILL BE PERSONAL INTERVENTION AND COMMUNICATIONS ON THE SUBJECTS OF THE MEETING.

THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING IS TO FURNISH ALL THE POLITICAL FORCES AND PUBLIC OPINION WITH A COMPLETE PICTURE OF THE PROBLEM ARISING FROM THE INSTALLATION OF NUCLEAR BASES ON ITALIAN TERRITORY IN RELATION TO THE POPULATION AND ENVIRONMENT. THE RISKS CONNECTED WITH THE PRESENCE OF SUBMARINES WITH NUCLEAR REACTORS AND ARMAMENT IN NORMAL OPERATION, OR IN CASE OF ACCIDENT, WILL BE DISCUSSED AND DETECTION AND MONITORING METHODS EMPLOYED IN ITALY TREATED. DATA COLLECTED UP TO NOW AND INVESTIGATIONS IN PROGRESS WILL BE PRESENTED. A COMPARISON WILL BE DRAWN BETWEEN ITALIAN REGULATIONS ON THE PEACEFUL AND THE MILITARY USE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY, INCLUDING THE AUTHORITY OF THE REGIONS AND LOCAL AGENCIES TO INTERVENE. THE SOCIAL-ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES FOR THE POPULATION OF THE PRESENCE OF A MILITARY BASE WILL BE EXAMINED IN DEPTH.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, THE CNEN, THE SUPERIOR HEALTH INSTITUTE OF THE SARDINIAN REGION AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE POLITICAL FORCES AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL ARE SUPPORTING THE MEETING. THE MEETING IS OPEN TO THE BROADEST PARTICIPATION. ANYONE WHO WANTS TO BE PRESENT OR PRESENT COMMUNICATIONS IS ASKED TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE SECRETARIAT OF THE GRUPPO AMBIENTE (ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP) (TEL. 5406102, 9:30-13:00; 17:00-20:00). AN OUTLINE OF THE REPORTS WHICH WE HAVE RECEIVED IS ATTACHED. END TEXT.

3. CLEARLY MEETING WILL PRODUCE ANOTHER RASH OF SENSATIONALIST
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PRESS TREATMENTS. THE FRAGILITY OF THE PRESENT ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION DOES NOT INSPIRE CONFIDENCE THAT THE GOI WILL SALLY FORTH IN DEFENSE OF OUR FACILITIES AT LA MADDALENA. AT THE SAME TIME, THE KINDS OF DISTORTIONS LIKELY TO EMERGE FROM THE MEETING OF THE "GRUPPO AMBIENTE" WILL ONLY REINFORCE THE FEARS OF THE NAIVE AND SKITTISH READERS OF ITALY'S YELLOW JOURNALS THAT THERE ARE SINISTER SECRET ACTIVITIES ON THE ISLAND AND WE CAN EXPECT SIMILAR IF ONLY SLIGHTLY MORE SOPHISTICATED

REACTIONS FROM THE ITALIAN ELITE. CURRENT GUIDELINES AS WE UNDERSTAND THEM WOULD PREVENT EMBASSY FROM THROWING MORE THAN "WE CAN NEITHER DENY NOR CONFIRM" INTO THE BALANCE. WITH THE GOI UNWILLING AND WE UNABLE TO REPLY TO THE ABSURD ALLEGATIONS BEING MADE ABOUT LA MADDALENA, IT IS INEVITABLE THAT THE MYTHS WILL BECOME ACCEPTED AS FACT AND POSSIBLY REACH SUCH MAGNITUDE THAT PUBLIC PRESSURES COULD PRESENT A REAL CHALLENGE TO OUR CONTINUED PRESENCE ON THE ISLAND. WE ARE ALREADY FACED WITH SUCH OTHERWISE LUDICROUS PRESS STORIES AS APPEARED IN THE WEEKLY TEMPO OF JULY 11, WHERE UNDER HEADINGS LIKE "THE PLUTONIUM TERROR", WE READ THAT OUR NUCLEAR WAR HEADS WERE STORED IN THE NATO AMMUNITION GALLERIES ON SANTO STEFANO TO SUPPORT THE MISSILE LAUNCHING SUBMARINES SERVICED BY THE GILMORE (THE LATTER, ITSELF, IT WAS STRONGLY HINTED, NUCLEAR POWERED).

4. IN THE FACE OF PRESENT CONSTRAINTS UPON PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF VIRTUALLY ANY ASPECT OF NPW AND SPECIAL WEAPON DEPLOYMENTS, THERE IS LITTLE THE EMBASSY CAN SUGGEST TO COUNTER THAT SORT OF FANTASIZING. THE DEPARTMENT, HOWEVER, MAY WISH TO CONSIDER POSSIBILITY OF SENDING A WASHINGTON EXPERT TO ATTEND THIS OPEN MEETING AND PERHAPS TAKING PART IN DISCUSSIONS. IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT AND SENSITIVE UNDERTAKING AND WOULD REQUIRE SOMEONE WITH BOTH THE EXPERTISE AND AUTHORITY TO MAKE A USEFUL CONTRIBUTION. THE "GRUPPO AMBIENTE" IS LARGELY COMPOSED OF SINCERE, REASONABLE, AND HONEST ENVIRONMENTALISTS BUT THIS MEETING WILL LIKELY INCLUDE SOME HOSTILE ELEMENTS BENT ON MAKING POLITICAL CAPITAL OF IT.

5. IN ROME IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO PREEMPT SOME OF THE ISSUES THAT WILL BE RAISED AT THE SEPTEMBER CONFERENCE IF WE WERE ABLE TO ENCOURAGE PUBLICATION OF A STRAIGHT STORY ON LA MADDALENA BEFOREHAND. WE WOULD SUGGEST SUPPLY A CONFIDENTIAL

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SCIENCE WRITER OF AN ITALIAN NEWSPAPER (IL GIORNALE) WHOM WE KNOW TO BE MODERATE, FRIENDLY, AND EXPERIENCED, WITH AS MUCH BACKUP MATERIAL ON THE GILMORE AND ITS CHARGES AS CAN BE MADE PUBLIC. SOME DATA ON HISTORY AT U.S. HOMEPORTS WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL. ADDITIONALLY, WE WOULD LIKE TO ARRANGE A VISIT BY THE NEWSMAN TO LA MADDALENA TO INCLUDE A TOUR OF THE GILMORE, AS MUCH OF THE LAND-BASED FACILITY AS THE GOI WILL PERMIT HIM TO SEE, AND WOULD STRONGLY RECOMMEND A VISIT TO AN SSN. IF SUCH A VISIT CAN BE AUTHORIZED, THE EMBASSY WOULD WELCOME:

- A) ANY MATERIAL THAT CAN BE PROVIDED TO FLESH OUT WHAT WE WOULD HOPE TO BE A MAJOR ARTICLE IN A BROADLY CIRCULATED AND INFLUENTIAL VEHICLE;
- B) GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION BETWEEN EMBASSY AND NEWSMAN PRELIMINARY TO VISIT TO LA MADDALENA. VOLPE

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